The American Labor Movement

Its Past

Its Present

Its Future

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by JAY LOVESTONE

Editor "Workers Age"

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Its Past, Present and Future

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Some Specific Features of the Labor Movement in America

The founders of the international revolutionary movement long ago realized the significance and the potentialities of the American working class. Engels in a letter to Mrs. Wischnewetzky (Florence Kelley) on June 3, 1886 wrote:

> "The breaking out of class war in America would be for the bourgeoisie of the whole world what the breakdown of Russian Czarism would be for the great military monarchs of Europe—the snapping of their mainstay."

The history of the American labor movement has proved the essential correctness of this analysis and perspective.

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SOME SPECIFIC FEATURES OF THE AMERICAN LABOR MOVEMENT

The international revolutionary leaders have always recognized the special conditions under which the American trade union and labor movements have developed. Contrary to the average notion that Marxism is dogmatism and that Marx, Engels and Lenin were "prophets", it is well to emphasize for general consumption and for particular notice by formal Communists that the founders and builders of scientific Socialism specifically warned against turning working class theory "into a dogma, into a petrified orthodoxy, into a symbol of belief," instead of using it as a "guide to action". In line with this approach, let us suggest some of the concrete features peculiar to the development of the American labor movement.

1. The continued availability of free land, up to as late a date as the close of the century, meant that there was no serious feudal background in this country.

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Instead of rebelling against the first life-sapping effects of capitalist industry, as the European workers did, the most dissatisfied and militant American workers could take the path of the pioneer, go to the free land and become independent producers. The role of the frontier in American labor history cannot be overestimated.

2. The development of United States imperialism towards the dominating position in the world market greatly influenced the development of the American working class. American labor, in its smug detachment from international working class problems, has, to no small extent, been influenced by the bourgeois notion of "happy isolation". Before the working class in the United States had had a chance to develop homogeneity, comparable to that developed by the continental European proletariat, it was split in two by imperialism: the labor aristocracy, who shared in the superprofit, and the great bulk of the working class, the unskilled, semi-skilled, who were shut off from all such privileges. We will elaborate this point further.

3. As a result of this split, American labor history is, in certain fundamental respects, analogous to British. In the United States, as in England, the trade unions were formed before a movement towards a national political party of labor had gotten under way. In continental Europe, the political labor parties came first and the trade unions were organized directly by them. Thus in the continental European countries, because there was no such split of the working class in the beginning, the political parties were the first expression of organized labor. Note how the Social-democratic Party of Germany controls the trade union movement, whereas in England, where the trade unions were organized first, they control the Labor party. In this country, the split brought on by imperialism, before definite crystalization of the working class, also resulted in only sectional organization of the workers—that is, into trade unions.

4. The social composition of the American working class has certain distinct features, certain special peculiarities. It has never been homogeneous but is sharply divided into Negro and white, native and for-

eign-born, skilled and unskilled, labor aristocrats and unprivileged. The United States has a bigger and more corrupt labor aristocracy than any other country. In America, more sharply than anywhere else, has the gap between the skilled and unskilled expressed itself in the standards of living, and in political and social rights.

5. The absence of a strong Social-democratic Party, or a mass Labor party, is peculiar to the United States.

6. The trade union movement, even to the limited extent of its organization, has not succeeded in winning a foothold in the basic industries, such as steel and oil, which are unorganized, and is losing much of its influence in mining and the railways.

7. In the basic industries of the United States, as nowhere else in the world, monopoly is so dominant that the machinery of business and the apparatus of the government are merged into an industrial feudalism. Witness the coal and iron towns where the companies own ourtright the judges, the police, the church, the schools, the mayors and the jobs. Under such conditions what influence can the archaic craft unions of the American Federation of Labor hope to wield?

8. In the United States, more than in any other capitalist country, rationalization of industry (i.e, scientific management) has meant for the working class intense exploitation, industrial accidents, rapid-aging, stultifying monotony, and life-sapping speed-up.

9. In no other highly developed capitalist country is there such a general absence of social legislation as in the United States.

10. It is no accident that, with all this challenge to the working class, there is a complete absence of any contribution to working class theory by the American labor movement. Instead, there is even an attitude of contempt for such theory.

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FURTHER ANALYSIS OF THE SPECIFIC FEATURES

It is impossible in this place to elaborate on all of the ten points which I have suggested for the read-

er's consideration. I shall limit myself to three questions which seem to me decisive.

1. Why was trade unionism and not a political party the first expression of labor organization in the United States?

2. Why has the American working class evinced no interest in social-economic theory such as is shown in Europe?

3. Why is there no Labor party in the United States?

Why was trade unionism and not a political party the first expression of labor organization in the United States? We have already touched upon this. Before class lines had a chance to harden in this country, before ever the proletariat could consolidate itself as a class to the extent that it had in the older countries, in the continental countries of Europe, the mighty surge of imperialism cleaved the tenuous bonds of working class solidarity, lifting on its crest the best organized groups of workers and separating them from the great mass of their fellow-workers. The interests of this small group congealed into narrow, selfish, craft channels, distinct from and hostile to the general stream of basic fundamental working class interests. Thus the dominant labor organization today is still frankly based on organization by crafts instead of by industry, and effectively excludes workers thru such devices as exorbitant initiation fees and high dues, color prejudice and apprentice rules.

Why has the American working class evinced no interest in social-economic theory such as is shown in Europe? There are two reasons for this. America, without any serious feudal background, was more free to concentrate on practical work and the accumulation of capital. In this set-up, without any accumulation of traditions but with increasing emphasis on practical activity, the working class naturally reflects a contempt for theorizing, generalizing and abstractions, and limits its learning to its own concrete experiences. What is working class theory? It is the crystalized expression of the general interests and tactics of the working class. No contributions to proletarian theory can be expected from a working class

which is not yet conscious of its existence as a class. The lack of working class homogeneity in the United States is obviously due to such special factors as differences in color, race, nationality and, in another category, differences arising from position in industry, such as skilled and unskilled, the labor aristocrat and laborer. As the American working class develops homogeneity, as its divisions are overcome, and as it begins to fight for its **general** interests, distinct from isolated, local, craft interests, we can expect that it will change its attitude on theory and will make contributions to the science of the international revolutionary struggle. So a functional change will lead to a change in **Anschauung**—general conception.

Why is there no Labor party in the United States? The American working class has been the most politically backward, the most conservative, the least class-conscious of any proletariat in the world. Bourgeois spokesmen and academic leaders have hailed this as a special American virtue. At one time they would say "Anglo-Saxon workers are different." But since English workers have shown such class-consciousness, have given "so much trouble," the capitalists now confine their praise to the American workers. A more objective analysis of this special American "virtue" of labor conservatism would lead to the dominant economic position of United States imperialism as the explanation. Wall Street imperialism has for years been able to gather such huge super-profits that it could afford to corrupt a substantial section of the working class with crumbs, sugar plums. Even the American working class as a whole has enjoyed a generally higher standard of living than prevails in other capitalist countries.

The seduction of the most organizationally experienced workers deprived the working class of some of its best trained forces, split it in two, and thus hampered the organization of the workers into a united class party which would defend and represent their general, their political interests.

The Economic Crisis and the Labor Movement

Let us consider briefly the trade union movement historically—its organization, structure, development, and role in the present economic crisis. We see the unions fall into four general categories: The American Federation of Labor, the conservative independent trade unions like the Amalgamated Clothing Workers and the Railway Brotherhoods, the I. W. W., and the newly created "Red" unions, since the close of 1928, led by the Communist Party.

The American Federation of Labor, the Railway Brotherhoods, and the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, in ideology, are essentially alike. The I.W.W., a specific expression of American syndicalism, no longer has any mass influence. The new unions recently created by the official Communist Party are dual, competing unions, reminiscent of those once built by Daniel De Leon in his still-born "Socialist Trades and Labor Alliance."

All the Communist groups agree in their opposition to the general conservative policies of American trade unionism which accepts the capitalist order for the present and future. Among the Communists there are sharp differences, today, over trade union tactics and strategy. The policy of dual unionism, deserting the conservative unions, splitting them and forming pure, virginal, revolutionary organizations, instead of working from within to transform the existing craft bodies into militant industrial unions is the strategy now pursued by the official Communist Party. This new policy of organizing competing unions marks a sharp break with the traditional revolutionary policy formulated by Lenin and pursued by the Communist International until the close of 1928. To quote Lenin:

"The Communist must join such unions in

all countries in order to make of them efficient and conscious organs of struggle for the abolition of capitalism and the establishment of Communism. . . Any voluntary withdrawal from the economic movement, every artificial attempt to organize special unions . . . threatens to isolate the most advanced and most conscious workers from the masses who are on the road to Communism. It threatens to hand over these masses to the opportunist leaders, thus playing into the hands of the bourgeoisie. . .

"Communists must on no account leave the ranks of the reactionary Federation of Labor.

"On the contrary, they should go into the old trade unions in order to revolutionize them."

It is for defending this trade union policy of Lenin and for opposing the splitting of established trade unions that the majority of the old leaders and founders of the American Communist Party were expelled from the official ranks by the Executive Committee of the Communist International. The expelled Communist Party of the United States (Majority Group) still pursues the Leninist trade union policy, working effectively in the American Federation of Labor, especially in the Anthracite coal fields, the needle trades and the textile industry.

When the official Communist Party today allows its members and followers to join an A. F. of L. union its plan is not to rebuild and transform this conservative organization but merely to lure some workers, split them away as quickly as possible, and then set up a new, pure, so-called revolutionary, dual union. Lenin roundly condemned such policies when he said:

"To refuse to work in them! To invent new workingmen's unions! This unpardonable blunder results in the Communists rendering the greatest service to the bourgeoisie."

* * *

THE ECONOMIC CRISIS AND THE LABOR MOVEMENT

What will be the effect of the present crisis on the labor movement, first in its relation to the capital-

ist system as such; second, its bearing on the employing class; and, finally, its influence on the development of a working class movement itself?

American capitalism will emerge from this crisis generally weakened. Its course will be feverish and spasmodic, intermittently shaken by recurring crises of increasing frequency, acuteness and duration, bringing in their wake a mounting army of permanently unemployed, dispossessed, pauperized and discarded.

As American capitalism loses its vitality, the economic basis of the labor aristocracy likewise shrinks. Wall Street capitalism will have less with which to corrupt and tempt any section of the working class. This factor, coupled with the elimination of skill lines, thru the extension of large-scale production and rationalization, will reduce the gap between skilled and unskilled, between the labor aristocracy and the great mass of workers, and will thus weld the working class into a more homogeneous class of society.

As the capitalist system is confronted with a growing unity and strength of the workers and its own disruption and increasing instability, it will be compelled to seek equilibrium in some form of State capitalism. More and more, the government, controlled by a small coterie of big bankers, will supervise and operate certain vital industries. Thus organized, the American ruling class will be able to fight more effectively in its battle for profits, in the world market and on its home front against the workers. The government, more and more, will openly play the role of strike-breaker.

How will the workers react to this new situation? The class struggle, thru the objective logic of the situation itself, will assume a sharper character and greater dimensions. The clashing of the proletariat on all fronts with the strike-breaking government will transform the class conflict more and more into an open political struggle.

The working class will grow in numbers as well as in homogeneity for it will absorb great numbers of the dispossessed farmers, ruined merchants, and small manufacturers in the cities, jobless professionals, and

other members of the middle class. The industrialization process, levelling the skill lines, will also draw into the ranks of the workers new laboring forces—Negroes from the land, women and children.

A tremendous radicalization force for the American labor movement is the simultaneous growth of socialist construction in the Soviet Union and capitalist decay in the United States. Unemployed by the millions, broken, hungry, despairing in the United States, they see in the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics no unemployment, shortened hours, rising living standards and hope on every front. The influence of the Soviet Union on the American labor movement, regardless of the opposition from the A. F. of L. burocracy and regardless of the present weakness and divisions of the American Communist movement, is bound to grow.

While it is admitted that there is no nation-wide radicalization in the ranks of labor today, it cannot be denied that the objective basis for such radicalization is now being laid by the economic crisis. An embittered resistance of the workers to the bosses taking away the gains won thru years of hard struggle will be one of the outstanding consequences of the present crisis. Strikes will increase in number and duration. The labor struggles will become increasingly political in character. The mounting disillusionment with American prosperity will spur the workers to more determined militancy.

These experiences of the workers will hasten the building of a mass political party, a genuine Labor party, to champion the most elementary interests of the workers **as a class** in the parliamentary campaigns and in the general political life of the country. Such a Labor party would have as its units working-class organizations, trade unions, cultural associations, benefit societies, sport groups, and not an individual membership. This is the form—membership by organization and block—which the Labor party has taken in England and elsewhere. Such a Labor party would, at the outset, probably have a confused program, lacking clarity in its policies, tactically inadequate from the prole-

tarian revolutionary viewpoint, but it would still mark a distinct forward step for the American working class. Politically it would mean the declaration of independence by the American working class from the big parties of capital.

Clearly, under these conditions the prospects for a mass Communist Party in the United States are encouraging despite the fact that the official Communist Party is now rent to pieces by splits and factions and is for the moment pursuing a false, sectarian tactical course. The mighty social forces generated by the economic crisis are stronger than the stupidities of individuals or the mistakes of groups of individuals. These economic forces will prove decisive in correcting the official Communist line, in restoring the Communist Party to political sanity, vigor, unity and growth.

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Problems and Tasks Facing the American Labor Movement

Six decisive problems face the American proletariat today. We have no blue-print analysis or solution. We do not announce with thunder on the right or left the calendar date for our goal. But we do see a definite trend in the working out of these problems.

Organization of the unorganized: The first task before the American working class is organizing the unorganized. Less than 10% of the American working class is today organized in trade unions of any character. To the extent that the Communists and other progressive and left-wing forces in the labor movement learn to link up constructive work inside existing conservative trade unions with well prepared efforts for organizing great masses of unorganized and semi-skilled workers, will they solve this problem. The Communists alone are not strong enough to organize the unorganized. The Communists and the left forces must learn to utilize the existing trade unions for the purpose of drawing more workers into these organizations as well as setting up new unions in fields where none exists today. These new unions will have to be **not** dual, not competitive, organizations, but new bodies added to the main trade union force of the country, the American Federation of Labor.

These new forces will add new blood, fresh fighting ranks to the main stream of the American labor movement. Only by organizing the unorganized, today 90% of the working class, can the labor and Communist movements grow in vitality, enlarge their perspective, and be strong enough to improve day-by-day working and living conditions and fight through to a new social order. All this obviously will come **despite**

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of and not because of the present reactionary leadership of the American Federation of Labor.

In the United States, unlike Europe, we face the task of organizing great bodies of unorganized workers **after** trustification has already been largely completed. Our efforts must proceed with careful and thorough preparation based on an understanding of the special conditions and problems in each industry. Communists should seize every opportunity to set an example of initiative and practical effort, but in giving such leadership the Communists will have to learn to show less of their face and rather have more of their hand felt. The rule of the Communists should be to inspire and guide instead of bossing, even at the risk of having nothing to write "home" about.

Winning the Negro toilers: Closely bound up with the question of organizing the unorganized is the task of drawing the Negro workers into the labor movement. This task has a significance which transcends the color line. An unorganized worker, white or black, is a more easy prey to the greed of the exploiters and perforce undermines the standards achieved by those organized. This is especially true in the case of Negro workers because the employers are quick to utilize all race prejudice and to pit one worker against the other in industrial struggles. The Negro has become a primary factor in American industry since the great migrations of Negro masses northward and the rapid industrialization of the South following the World War. As industrialization proceeds and large scale industry is extended the Negro laborer will assume ever-greater importance in the economic life of the country.

Particularly under these conditions is it suicidal for the trade union movement to continue its hostility to the organization of the Negroes. The definitely anti-Negro position of the national officialdom of the A. F. of L., its persistent opposition to equal rights is as much a menace to the white as to the black workers. So long as any group of unorganized workers is excluded from unionization there is no hope for the ef-

fective general organization of the great mass of unorganized.

It is the writer's opinion that the most practical program is for the Negroes, **in certain cases,** to form their own unions, unions of Negro workers. Then, the organized resources of such Negro unions can the more readily be utilized thru strikes, for merging and uniting with all workers regardless of color, for cooperation with other unions in labor campaigns, and organized educational effort which, along with the every day activities, will serve to uproot race prejudice and develop one powerful trade union movement born out of its common travail and interests.

For a Labor party: As a class, American labor has yet to be born politically. Ours is the only country in which the working class does not have a national mass political party of its own. As previously indicated it is the task of all progressive and militant workers to help develop a Labor party based primarily on the trade unions. The Labor party should serve to rally and unite all workers organizations, regardless of individual differences, around the issue of independent working class political action. This would transform the workers from pawns of the two big bourgeois parties to conscious forces moving and fighting in their own behalf. It is the best way of destroying the corrupting and paralyzing influences of the so-called non-partisan political course of "reward your friends and punish your enemies" sponsored by Green, Woll and Company and the dead hand of Gompers.

Towards a new strike strategy: American labor faces the task of developing a new strike and organization strategy. To persist in narrow craft unionism in the face of mighty and far-flung monopolies is like racing an ox cart against a powerful multi-motored airplane. The craft unions must be **amalgamated** (not destroyed) into industrial unions consistent with modern economic developments and structurally fitted to counter the powerful trusts and corporations.

The very nature of American industry today adds to the complications and problems of strike strategy for the workers. The intensified exploitation, mounting

wage cuts, the influx of farmers, Negroes, women and children into industry, the declining importance of skilled workers, the chronic organic unemployment with its permanent reserve army of no-occupation, are some of the basic and newer determinants in the problem. The consequent sharpening class struggles will of themselves soon induce new strike tactics in the trade union movement. The limited possibilities of partial (isolated crafts, as turners in the shoe industry) strikes, will be assessed and judged dynamically in the light of the pervading force of monopoly capital.

To arrive at effective strike strategy we must not hide the difficulties confronting us. First, the employing class is today on the offensive along the whole front. The trade union officialdom fights the strike as a weapon of labor in the struggle for improved conditions of work and life. The only strikes they engage in are those forced upon them by the rank and file in revolt and these strikes they often mislead and sabotage. The A. F. of L. officials naturally prefer to seek their solutions in conference with employers in speakeasies, swell hotel suites in Atlantic City or Florida, and sometimes even in the scintillating atmosphere of Hoover's White House. The recent 10% wage cut for railway workers is a case in point.

And because of these and many other difficulties from without and within the labor movement, the only way in which strikes can be successful is by involving large numbers of workers. To achieve this broad base, the largely agitational strike strategy, pursued today by left wingers and official Communists, must be transformed into practical programs of carefully selected concrete demands rooted in the specific conditions of each industry. Such demands must appear to the workers as realistic and not fantastic. They must be based not on the employers readiness or capacity to grant them but solely on the interests of the workers and they must be limited only by the understanding of the workers involved. For example, the six-hour day would be a highly desirable immediate demand did it not seem entirely fantastic to the overwhelming majority of the workers in the United States who work more than eight hours a day. Demands, no matter

how radical-sounding they may be, cannot be imposed on the workers but must reflect their understanding and readiness.

It is fatal to play with the strike as a weapon. Tho no guarantee of success can be demanded before calling the strike yet there should always be a possible fighting chance of victory. One of the major prerequisites for successful strikes is, in all cases, to supplement the regular union machinery with a broad rank and file machinery, to draw into active participation and management of the strike the greatest number of workers possible. Such rank and file voice and power, such extension of trade union democracy, is the surest weapon against betrayal and sell-out by corrupt union officials.

The new strike strategy will necessarily involve adequate publicity, winning moral and financial support of broad sections of the whole labor movement for strikers, the mobilization of friendly forces in non-working class ranks, such as the liberal petty bourgeoisie and intellectuals, the building of a strong department for the legal defense of strikers, and a commissary department to feed strikers. More and more strike struggles will assume the character of a combat between huge armies.

Towards Working Class Unity!

Towards working class unity: Sectarianism and dual-unionism are gnawing at the vitals of the labor movement. These Siamese twins, swaddled in heavy blankets of high-sounding revolutionary phrases, have plagued the ranks of the American labor movement with confusion, dissension and sterility. It is true that the dominant leadership of the A. F. of L. is burocratic and corrupt, that the leaders are merely lieutenants of Wall Street in the ranks of the working class. But all this does not mean that the entire trade union movement is just one homogeneous reactionary mass or that the union masses and the burocrats are identical.

The Communists will have to learn not only to love their principles but also how to work among the masses so as to win them for their revolutionary program. The official Communist Party must drop its present policy of union-splitting, of deserting organizations because they are not yet militant enough, because they are dominated by reactionary leaders. The official Communist party must drop its sectarian policy of artificially creating so-called new and "pure" revolutionary unions, which actually are neither revolutionary nor unions, but are paper organizations which merely bring further confusion and division into the ranks of labor. It is the task of the Communists and the left wingers to become the banner-bearers of trade union unity and thus become the driving force for working class unity against capitalist reaction. In this connection it would be very well for the official Communist party in the United States to recall and follow the advice of Friederich Engels to the American labor left-wingers at the close of 1886:

"It is far more important that the movement

> should spread . . . and embrace as much as possible the whole American proletariat than that it should proceed from the beginning on perfectly correct theoretical lines. There is no better road to theoretical clearness of comprehension than to learn by one's own mistakes . . . And for a whole large class there is no other road, especially for a nation so eminently practical and so contemptuous of theory as the Americans. The great thing is to get the working class to move as a class; that once obtained, they will soon find the right direction and all who resist. . . will be left in the cold with small sects of their own. Therefore, I think also the Knights of Labor a most important factor in the movement which ought not to be pooh-poohed from without but to be revolutionized from within. . . Our theory is not a dogma, but the exposition of a process of evolution and that process involves successive phases. To expect that the Americans will start with the full consciousness of the theory worked out in older industrial countries is to expect the impossible. . . . But above all, give the movement time to consolidate. Do not make the inevitable confusion of the first start worse confounded by forcing down people's throats things which at present they cannot properly understand but which they soon will learn."

It is interesting to note a new source of admiration and support for purity of dogma in the revolutionary movement. Some of the petty bourgeoisie, cracked by the crisis and stock market crash, are now staggering into Communist ranks with much feeling and little thought. These new recruits of the official Communist Party are becoming more holy than the Pope, neo-Catholic, more "left" than even the present ultra-left leadership of the American Communist Party. Nothing is "red" enough for these new "converts" in their "experiment" and "great adventure" in Leninism! These converts fall in with the present Communist Party doctrine that the A. F. of L. is hopelessly reactionary from top to bottom, fossilized, and a mere

adjunct of the government, sterile and worthless.

We may grant at the outset the left wing's difficulties in capturing the whole A. F. of L. or any of its big international unions. There is slight chance of attaining such objectives within the next few years. But the point is that the revolutionary work in the conservative unions is not conditional upon the practical possibility of capturing the machinery, the apparatus, of these unions as such. Rather it should concern itself with winning a majority of these masses for militant class struggle policies. The transformation of these organizations into genuine fighting organs of the working class should be the cardinal aim of revolutionary activities in reactionary unions. In this we see our greatest hope and opportunity. But the desertion of the conservative unions by the militant forces leads only to splits and divisions, to the destruction of organizations built thru years of struggle. Regardless of the revolutionary-sounding tom-tom heralding this ultra-left course, Lenin's diagnosis of the infantile paralysis in Communism remains a timely warning. It would be well for these half-baked "radicals" to come down to earth and to change their tactics lest the alarm signals become distress signals and the official Communist Party is stranded on a small, pure, ideological island.

There could be nothing more fatal to the American labor movement in general and the revolutionary movement in particular than the illusion that the A. F. of L. can no longer grow and has no future. It is silly to look at the existing American trade union movement with its 3,000,000 members as stationary, unchangeable. As we have seen, profound changes are developing in the ranks of the labor movement. An influx of masses into the old unions, the A. F. of L. and the like, is entirely possible. We have seen how the base of the labor aristocracy is being undermined. In the 90's when British imperialism occupied the international position now held by the United States, the trade union movement in Great Britain was like the American trade union movement today, ultra-reactionary in its leadership and policies. Skilled elements with narrow guild

traditions then dominated the British trade union movement.

But the first shaking of the British Empire brought the "new unionism" and a new leadership. Hundreds of thousands of unskilled and semi-skilled workers poured into the British unions and brought a new breath of life into the organizations. Our own experience, during the war, when several million new workers entered the A. F. of L., was similar. One cannot of course overemphasize the fact that the A. F. of L. officialdom was not responsible for this mass influx of yesterday. Today, they generally oppose the opening of the trade union ranks to new workers. Tomorrow, they may be counted upon actively to resist. Yet we must keep in mind that such social and economic forces as another war or a wave of new class struggles growing out of the present crisis are far more powerful than the corruption and machinations of the Greens, the Wolls, and other trade union leaders of their type.

The outlook is clearly for an ingress into the trade unions, for sharpened class conflicts involving millions of workers in trade unions as well as the millions of sorely-pressed unorganized. In the course of these struggles the unorganized are likely to pour into the unions and finally they will serve as the decisive force, the leaven germinating a new spirit of struggle, militancy and power in these organizations.

Towards international working class unity: The American labor movement, strengthened in number and influence, will continue its development—craft to industrial unionism; trade union to political action on a national scale; and finally achieve a world perspective of international unity and cooperation with its struggling brothers in Latin-America, Europe, Asia and Africa, and the victorious proletariat in the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics.

Historically the American proletariat is destined to play a decisive revolutionary role in the international working class struggle because it is fighting the last and greatest stronghold of world capitalism, Yankee imperialism. The World War and the economic crisis

have, as we have pointed out, liberated forces molding a new labor movement—more healthy and revolutionary in outlook and action, prepared to fulfill its historic mission. We can look to the American proletariat to take its place, in the not-distant future, in the front ranks of the international working class army, fighting to overthrow the decaying capitalist system and building in its place a society free from all class rule, exploitation and oppression—a socialist order.

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